

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

A substitute specification which corrects numerous minor errors is being submitted herewith. Replacement drawings have been submitted to correct minor errors therein.

The claims have been amended to recite that the "tray stocker is movable reciprocatively and is driven for reciprocal movement. Basis for this amendment is believed to be evident throughout the specification. New Claims 47-50 further recite a table serving as a location for temporary turnout. Basis for this is the Table 70.

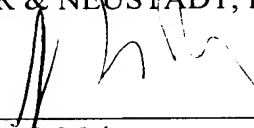
Applicants wish to thank Examiner Singh for the courtesy of an interview on February 26, 2008 at which time the amended claims were discussed with respect to U.S. patent 3,944,046 (Kubicek), which was applied against the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102. In particular, Applicants pointed out that the claims now recite a tray stocker and tray stocker drive device for reciprocally moving the tray stocker in the vertical direction to position the tray stocker to a number of predetermined positions. Applicants also explained that the reciprocal vertical positions recited in the claims provided utility in a tray component supply apparatus having replenishment or empty tray holding sections. Applicants pointed out that Kubicek was instead directed to an article transfer apparatus for vertically raising articles from one level to a higher level (column 1, lines 1-18). Accordingly, Kubicek does not provide a device for reciprocally moving the conveyor belt carrying the articles to be transported.

In view of this explanation, it was agreed at the conclusion of the interview that the amended claims define over Kubicek.

Applicants therefore believe that the present application is in a condition for allowance and respectfully solicit an early Notice of Allowability.

Respectfully submitted,

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